

Andrew Jackson to John Armstrong, December 17, 1813, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO JOHN ARMSTRONG.¹

¹ In 1828 the House of Representatives called on the Secretary of War for copies of the correspondence between Jackson and the War Department from the beginning of the Creek war and referring to the terms of enlistment of the militia. This letter was first in the series sent in response to the call. It is in *Am. St. Papers, Milit.*, III. 786. The text here given differs somewhat from the text of the letter received. It seems to be a draft by Reid with a final paragraph by Jackson.

Fort Strother, December 16, 1813.

Sir: The volunteers who enrolled themselves under the Acts of Congress of the 6th. Feby and 6th. July 1812, and who composed a part of the forces under my command in this expedition, beleiving their term of service expired on the 10th. Inst utterly refused to prosecute the campaign any farther. Not considering myself empowered to discharge them, I had them marched to Nashville—there to await any orders which you or the governor of Tennessee might think proper to give them.

I find since the arrival of Genl. Cocke who formed a junction with me on the 12th. Inst that the term of service of the greater part of his men will expire in a few days, and of the whole, in a few weeks. No portion of them, it seems, was raised under the requisition of the president, as they had been ordered to be by the govr. I shall therefore order Genl Cocke back to raise the 1500 men he was required to raise, and whose term of service,

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will I apprehend, be six months; and shall permit him to march back and discharge that part of his present troops whose term of service is within a few days of expiring.

The want of supplies alone has prevented me from having terminated, before this time, the Creek war. It, with the want of cooperation from the E. Tennessee troops compelled me to retrograde to this place after the battle at Talladega; and it continues to prevent me from recommencing operations. All that my utmost exertions could effect has been accomplished; and yet I have not a sufficiency of breadstuff to authorise another movement at this time, even if I had troops to authorise it. All the difficulties and delays of the campaign are to be ascribed wholly to the contractors. But I shall not cease my exertions to provide both men and supplies to enable me to prosecute the campaign to a successful termination. The importance of it is too great, and the progress of it has been too fortunate to be abandoned.

I have sent to Tennessee to have other troops raised by voluntary enlistment to terminate the expedition; and they are expected to arrive by the 25th. Inst. By that time it is believed there will be a sufficiency of supplies to enable me to commence another movement.

I received on the 11th Inst a letter of instructions from Maj. Genl. Pinckney who wrote from Milledgeville; and advised him by the return of his express, of my situation.

2Chenuba and Lashly, from, Lashlys Fort at Talladega, two friendly and faithful creeks has arrived here this evening, and advise me that the advance of the Georgia army with the aid of the cowetas has had an engagement with the hostile creeks, and that the Georgians, has retreated, that the hostile creeks are assembled in force and are about to

2 This last paragraph is in Jackson's hand.

advance and attack and destroy their fort, and then to advance and attack me, should this be a fact I will try with my full force to save those friendly Creeks, and defeat the enemy on the heights of Talladega. had I but one Regt of regulars added to those few heroes who will die with me or carry into effect the object of the campaign, I could reach

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the walls of Pensacola in two months. there is the origin and source of the war. Chenuby and Lashly inform me that the Spaniards at Pensacola has furnished one Town with large quantities of powder and lead, and has invited the ballance down to receive ample supplies. *delenda est Carthago* , or we will never have peace with the Indians. Nay more to render the southern frontier safe in a state of war, we must Possess the sea cost, and settle the interior with our own citizens for 150 miles [s]outh from the sea from Georgia to the inhabited parts of the M. Territory.³ The 39th. Regt. would be of great use in defending the garrisons, erected, and keeping open the communication in the rear. Will you please order them to aid in the prosecution of the campaign. I have the honor to be respectfully yr
mo ob serv

³ The sentence, of which this word is the end, is not in the letter published by the Secretary of War in 1828. "M. Territory" means the Mississippi Territory, then including what is now Alabama.